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NOTES.

A PASSAGE IN THE ANGLO-SAXON POEM "THE RUIN," CRITICALLY DISCUSSED.

The little fragment of "The Ruin" (Exeter Book, 123^b-124^b) is one of the most charming specimens of Old English poetry, and has been praised by every critic. The remnant that is left makes us regret beyond measure that the greater part has been lost, and that even in the extant portion some passages are wholly corrupt through missing words. It is the purpose of this paper to discuss what is possibly the most difficult passage in the poem. The MS reading, as given by Prof. Wülker (Bibliothek d. Ags. Poesie, Bd. I, p. 297), is as follows :

l. 22. for þon þas hofu dreorgiað and þæs teafor
geapa tigelum sceadeð hrost beagas rof, etc.

The first clause is clear enough: Forþon þas hofu drêorgiað : "therefore these courts are desolate." *Drêorgiað* is a ἀπαξ λεγόμενον, but is evidently formed from the adj. *drêorig* (cf. *hât* > *hâtian*, *hâlig* > *hâlgian*), and means *to be sad, desolate, deserted*. Grein (Bibliothek I, p. 248, 1857) and Leo (*Carmen Anglosaxonicum*, . . . *quod inscribitur Ruinae*, Halle'sche Universitätschrift, 1865) read *dreorgiað* without either authority or reason. Conybeare (Illustrations of Anglo-Saxon Poetry, p. 249) reads *hofa*. After *dreorgiað* he places a semicolon, and gives the next sentence as follows :

and ðæs teafor geapu,
tigelum sceadeð,
hrost beagas-rof
hryre wong gecrong,
gebrocen to beorgum.

The translation given is: et haec purpurea (regalis Domus) prona, tegulis divulsis, cubiculum annuliferi herois ruina in campum prolapsa est, inter urbis fragmenta. It would be sheer waste of space to examine this translation critically ; a first glance shows that Conybeare merely attempted to give the general sense of the passage. Thorpe (Codex Exoniensis, 1842, p. 477) ends the sen-

tence, as I have done above, with *rof*, and translates: "Therefore these courts are dreary and its purple arch with its tiles shades the roost, proud of its diadem." *Geapu* here then means *arch*, and *þæs* is gen. sing. *referring to a plural antecedent (sic !)*. *Sceadeð* he derives from *sceadu*, shade (cf. *besceadeð*, Sol. and Sat. v. 339). By *purple* Thorpe understands *regal*, but what means "roost, proud of its diadem"? This is as dark as the Anglo-Saxon text itself.

Grein (Bibliothek) has *þás teafor—geðpu*, and would probably translate, "and the red (colored) gates." *Tēafor* is a kind of coloring matter, *minium*, and answers to Old Norse *taufr*, O. H. G. *zoubar*, etc. (cf. *tiver*, where the *ī* is, as I take it, a provincial shortening out of *ēē* < A.-S. *ēa*). The history of these words has not yet been satisfactorily cleared up (*vid.* Schade, *Altdeutsches Wörterbuch*, and Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*), yet the meaning of the Anglo-Saxon word can hardly be disputed. In this case it seems to be used for the sake of alliteration. *Geðpu* Grein evidently considers as nom. pl., and identifies the word with O. N. *gap*. There is, however, no sufficient reason for changing the MS reading; *geapa* may be a weak nom. sing., and *þæs* (instead of *þes*) occurs also in verses 1 and 9. The only other instance I have seen of this form is in *Crist* and *Satan*, v. 100, where, however, a second hand has changed it into *þes* (*vid.* Sievers' Collation, Haupt's *Zeitschrift*, XV 456). Toller-Bosworth reads *gedpu*, *expanse*; there seems to me, however, to be no doubt of the shortness of the first syllable in *geapa*, as also in *geapian*, and I know no reason why the adj. *geap* should not be included. The modern Eng. *gap* and *gape*; O. N. *gap*, *gapa*; M. H. G. *gaffen*; Low German *gapen*, all speak for *ǣ*. Leo translates: "und darum diese rothen Lücken." What he means by these "rothe Lücken" is not perfectly clear, yet it seems to be an allusion to breaches in the walls. In the second volume of his *Sprachschatz*, Grein turns from his former interpretation, rejects the idea that *tēafor* in this passage is the usual word meaning *minium*, compares it rather with O. N. *toft* = "ein Hügelchen, ein für einen Bau bestimmter Platz," and gives as its meaning: "Baustätte mit den äusseren Wänden des Hauses."¹ However pleasant such an interpretation would be, it cannot be allowed. *Tēafor* and *toft*

¹ Grein thus makes two distinct words; *teafor* = *minium* (no etymology given), and *tēafor* = building lot, corresponding at the same time to O. N. *toft* and *taufr*, O. H. G. *zoubar*, etc.

cannot be identified ; Anglo-Saxon *ēa* calls for O. N., as for Gothic, *au*, and *tēafor* must be the same word as O. N. *tauftr*, O. H. G. *zoubar*, etc. (cf. *rēad*, Got. *rauds*, O. N. *rauðr*; *bēag*, O. N. *baugr*).

In verse 31^b Grein (Bibliothek) reads :

tigelum scaredeð (?)
hrôst beages rof.

How he would translate this I am not perfectly sure, as he has not considered this reading at all in his *Sprachschatz*. In *sceardeð* he doubtless thought of a connection with *scearde* (v. 5). Afterwards (Germania X, p. 422) he returns to the MS reading *sceadeð*, makes *hrôst-bedges* a compound, and, instead of *rof*, reads *hrôf*. This last is no very violent alteration, since initial *h*, especially in union with *r*, *l*, and *w*, often falls away (cf. Sievers, §217, note). *Sceadeð* is here no derivative from *sceadu*, but is to be written *sceadeð*, and is the same as Gothic *skaidan*, O. H. G. *sceidan*, etc. *Hrôst* seems to be the old form of present *roost*, and is probably related to *hrôf*. In *Heliand* (70³⁸) the word occurs in the signification *roof*, which agrees with its dialectic use in Scotland (cf. Toller-Bosworth s. v.). What means, though, *hrôst-bedges*? *Bēag* signifies ring, bracelet, crown, etc. From this last meaning Grein makes the transition to *summit*, *gable*, and translates *hrôst-bedg* with *corona canteriorum*, i. e. "Karniess des Dachsparrens" or "Dachsparrenwerk." Such a transition seems to me both violent and unwarranted. Here again the MS reading, *hroost beages rof*, seems to me better than any change. *Hrôst* I take to mean *roof*, yet here used synecdochically for *house*, *palace*, just as Lat. *tectum*. Similar cases may be seen in *ecg* = sword, *rand* and *bordhrêða* = shield, *sceaft* = spear, etc.

Bēages rôf I translate, then, *renowned for its treasures*, that is, for that dispensing of rings, bracelets, etc., to the followers of the princes. Compare the frequent allusion to this custom in *Bêowulf*, as seen in the words *bēag*, *bēag-gyfa*, *bēah-hord*, *bēah-sele*, etc. *Rôf* means *strong*, *valiant*, but also *renowned*. So Zupitza translates it, El. 50, and Grein, And. 473. The etymology is not perfectly clear. The word occurs in no other Teutonic dialect save Old Saxon, and there seems plainly to mean *renowned* (cf. Schade, *Altdeutsches Wörterbuch* s. v., and Diefenbach, *Vergl. Wörterbuch* s. *hropjan*). For this meaning in A.-S. compare further the compounds *sigerôf* and *dædrôf*. The use of the limiting gen. with *rôf*, as with other similar adjectives, needs no remark.

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